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IN THIS ISSUE

Where available, the statistics in this issue are presented as time series for the last three years of annual data, the last nine quarters or 15 months of data. To assist analysis most tables include percentage movements, as well as levels, of series.

Quarterly and monthly data for most series, and annual data for a limited number of series, are available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics for earlier periods than that shown in this publication. Many series can be obtained on electronic media. Inquiries should be directed to the National Information Service on 1300 135 070 or <client.services@abs.gov.au>.

CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

From March quarter 2009 industry statistics reported in Table 6.9 are on the basis of **Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification** (ANZSIC), 2006 edition. This edition replaces the 1993 edition which has been in use since 1994. The new edition of ANZSIC was developed to provide a more contemporary industrial classification system taking into account issues such as changes in the structure and composition of the economy, changing user demands and compatibility with major international classification standards.

Industry data up to December quarter 2007 are only available on an ANZSIC 1993 basis and data on an ANZSIC 2006 basis are shown from March quarter 2008, although for all quarters of 2008 data is available on the basis of both editions of ANZSIC.

EXTENDED TIME SERIES

Long time series datacubes for this publication are now provided on the ABS website.

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

See the Abbreviations section following the Explanatory Notes.

INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070, email client.services@abs.gov.au or Ms Jo Jackson on Canberra (02) 6252 6114, email [<economic.indicators@abs.gov.au>](mailto:economic.indicators@abs.gov.au).

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A monthly compendium of economic statistics, presenting comprehensive tables, graphs, commentaries, feature articles and technical notes. Primarily a reference document, the publication provides a broad basis for analysis and research on the Australian economy and includes statistics that can be applied to both macro-economic and sectoral analyses. The publication contains statistics under the following headings: national accounts, international accounts, consumption and investment, production, prices, labour force and demography, incomes and labour costs, financial markets, state comparisons and international comparisons.

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FEATURE ARTICLE: WHEN IT'S NOT "BUSINESS-AS-USUAL": IMPLICATIONS FOR ABS TIME SERIES

INTRODUCTION

Sound economic statistics are vital for decision-making. The ABS has a key role in producing high quality statistical information to assist with policy- and decision-making at all levels of government and in the community more broadly. One of the most useful types of economic statistics produced by the ABS is its time series information: a collection of observations of well-defined data items obtained through repeated measurements over time. The examination of time series can allow a data user to monitor phenomena over time and identify changes to series which may be associated with external events of interest. In particular, the ABS removes systematic calendar related effects from original estimates (or raw data) to produce seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. These are published as additional analytical products to help users to understand time series signals.

In recent months, a range of government interventions, designed to mitigate or offset the consequences of the global financial crisis, have been implemented in Australia. These interventions have been detected in a range of ABS time series, including Labour Force and Retail Trade. To appropriately reflect the global economic crisis in ABS time series data, and hence, to ensure the accuracy of time series analytical products produced by the ABS, a number of methodological decisions are required. These decisions (discussed later) will allow

users to appropriately interpret affected time series data.

This article reviews the implications of unusual external events on ABS time series (i.e. when it's not 'business-as-usual' in the economy). It also discusses the principles and issues involved in making methodological decisions regarding the appropriate treatment of time series in these circumstances. A case study of the ABS Retail Trade time series, which has exhibited changed characteristics in the presence of the current unusual economic environment, will be used to illustrate the issues involved in maintaining a high quality seasonal adjustment.

TIME SERIES DATA AND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ORIGINAL, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED AND TREND ESTIMATES

Typically, the ABS decomposes an observed, original time series into three components: the trend (general direction of the series), the seasonal component (systematic, calendar related movements) and the irregular component (unsystematic, short term fluctuations). Seasonal influences tend to occur regularly once or more each year, and include the effect of periodic factors such as weather, holidays, social conventions, administrative practices, and the composition of the months or quarters into trading days. Seasonally adjusted estimates are produced by estimating the seasonal component and removing this from the original series. Seasonally adjusted estimates therefore reflect the combined effect of the trend and irregular components. The ABS then calculates trend estimates by applying a smoothing procedure to the seasonally adjusted estimates. Therefore, the seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are **analytical products** rather than raw data.

The ultimate objective of ABS time series techniques is to provide users with two high quality analytical time series indicators that present different but complementary information derived from an original time series, for the purpose of informing decision making. The seasonally adjusted estimates have had seasonal patterns removed, allowing useful information to be portrayed regarding direction and the amount of volatility in the data. Trend estimates, produced by smoothing the seasonally adjusted estimates, provide important information regarding the longer term behaviour of the data. It is important to note that neither the trend nor seasonally adjusted series are inherently of more value or importance than the other.

It is also important to distinguish between the trend **concept**, defined as the mid- and long-term signal in a series, and a trend **estimate**, which is the estimated mid- and long-term signal. It may be analytically difficult to produce a good trend estimate which reflects the trend concept due to a large distortion or outlier in the series, but the trend concept is still appropriate with respect to the mid- and long-term signals in a time series.

DEFINING UNUSUAL EVENTS: THE CASE OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS

As with any analytical products, the ABS seasonally adjusted and trend estimation methods make certain normality assumptions. The methods used to produce seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are reasonably reliable under 'normal', 'business-as-usual' circumstances. However, unusual real world events, such as the global financial crisis or significant government economic interventions, will affect seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. If an appropriate methodological intervention is not applied to the seasonally adjusted and trend estimation methods on time, or is applied inappropriately, then users may be misled when interpreting the seasonally adjusted and trend estimates.

Unusual events can be grouped into two categories according to their causes: methodological changes (such as changes to classification, scope, coverage etc.); and real world effects (unusual events with significant impact on ABS statistics, such as the global economic crisis). Examples of real world effects include the introduction of Goods and Services Tax in July 2000, which impacted on the Retail Turnover; the 2000 Sydney Olympics Games, which affected Overseas Arrivals and Departures, and the gold sell-off by the Reserve Bank of Australia in 1997, which affected the Exports of Other Goods etc.

In this article, we are focusing specifically on the impact of real world effects on ABS time series, with particular emphasis on the recent and still ongoing global economic crisis and consequent government interventions. In brief, the global economic crisis was marked by a series of international and domestic events, commencing around the September 2007 quarter and continuing to the present time. These events included:

- The US credit crunch and discovery of sub-prime mortgage securities;
- The drying up of liquidity;
- Announcements of bankruptcy of overseas credit providers, with some government intervention to nationalise or acquire large stakes in some companies;
- Falls in domestic and international stock markets;
- Several bank mergers or acquisitions;
- The insolvency announcements in Australia by a range of commercial and financial entities;
- Provision of liquidity facilities by Central banks;
- Government guarantees of bank deposits; and
- Australian Government implementation of a series of varied stimulus packages (December 2008; February 2009 etc.).

These events, and other related events not listed above, have provided a challenge to those producing social/economic indicators including a number of ABS economic time series. The challenge for the ABS is to evaluate and monitor the likely impact of these events on economic time series to determine the most appropriate methodological treatment, if any, in order to produce high quality seasonally adjusted and trend estimates and maintain the ABS' goal of promoting informed interpretation of signals in time series data.

IMPACT OF UNUSUAL EVENTS ON TIME SERIES ANALYTICAL PRODUCTS

Real world impacts on time series analytical products, such as seasonally adjusted and trend estimates, can be minimised if the ABS has reliable information for estimating the statistical impact of the event. However, this information is often unavailable and the ABS therefore has to estimate the extent of the effect using the original series.

The seasonal adjustment procedure used by the ABS is based on the X-11 method developed by the US Bureau of the Census (Shiskin, et al. 1967). With this method, large changes in the original time series (whether temporary or permanent) impact significantly on the seasonal and trend estimation procedures. Consequently, these large changes will affect the seasonally adjusted and trend estimates.

For the **estimation of seasonal factors**, the current seasonal adjustment process is relatively robust as it will discount 'extreme' irregular values so that the seasonal factors are not distorted in the short-term. For example, for series with low volatility, any extreme irregular value larger than 1.5 times the standard deviation (a quantity to measure the spread of the series' volatility over time) will be ignored, and the seasonal adjustment process will treat the occurrence of the extreme irregular as an outlier, replacing it with a more representative value for the purpose of estimating seasonal factors.

Seasonally adjusted estimates are derived by removing the appropriate seasonal factor from the original series. Due to the robustness of the seasonal factor estimation, the accuracy of the seasonally adjusted estimates will generally not be compromised by the occurrence of an extreme irregular. It is important to note, however, this does not mean that they accurately reflect the underlying **long-term** movement of the series, especially when the unusual events have a lasting impact.

Trend estimates are obtained by smoothing the seasonally adjusted estimates, with an assumption that the irregular component is random and normally distributed. Distortion of the trend estimate will occur in the presence of an unusual event, and if no correction for the impact is introduced, then the trend estimate can be misleading.

Unusual events may affect one or more of the three components of a time series. Unusual events may cause a short-term, one-off impact (irregular), a change to the pattern of seasonal variations (seasonality) or a change in the underlying movement of the series (trend). These are briefly discussed here using recent real world examples.

A large, extreme irregular is an uncharacteristic movement in the original estimates. For example, the Sydney Olympics (September 2000) demonstrated a one-off effect on both overseas passengers arrivals and retail trade turnover. In turn, this impact led to a one-off impact on the seasonally adjusted series. If a one-off extreme impact is not corrected, it can distort the trend estimation procedure resulting in misleading information, as the estimated trend may be either deflated or inflated for one or more time points. If information on the magnitude of the impact is available, a correction can be applied to ensure the trend is not distorted. However, this information is often not available at the time, and at least one or more additional observations are normally required to help assess the impact.

A permanent **change to the seasonal pattern** is referred to as a seasonal break. To reliably assess whether a change in seasonal pattern is permanent, the ABS uses three or more years of data, from the point of the seasonal break. If a change in seasonal pattern is found to be permanent, an appropriate correction is

applied, as abrupt changes to the seasonal pattern can adversely affect the reliability of seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. An example of a proposed seasonal break correction could be the introduction of new legislation that affects the timing of tax collections. The consequent breaks in the seasonal factors would be recognised and corrected, but usually only after three years have elapsed.

An abrupt and sustained **change in the level of the series** is referred to as a trend break. When a trend break occurs, the ABS corrects for the permanent shift in trend estimates by either estimating the size of the break or using prior information to determine the size of the break. More commonly, there is insufficient information relating to the size of the trend break at the time of the impact. The ABS therefore has to use the series to estimate, post-hoc, the magnitude of the trend break. At least three observations after the occurrence of the trend break are needed to reliably estimate the magnitude of the break. For example, the introduction of the GST in July 2000 forced the ABS to suspend the publication of trend estimates until November 2000 when more data were available to estimate the impact.

A sequence of unusual events with an unknown quantifiable nature can also occur in reality. Under these circumstances, the ABS has to make a judgment either not to apply any methodological intervention and to provide a warning to our data users indicating the potential impact to our time series analytical products, or to apply appropriate methodological interventions with the best information at the time and avoid misinterpretation of the analytical products. For the latter case, one approach could be to use the projected seasonal factors from the past observations rather than estimating seasonal factors using data up to the most current time point, and suspend the publication of trend estimates. The ABS has to make a sound judgment and balance factors such as timeliness, accuracy and interpretability of its analytical products taking into account the ABS' seven-dimension data quality framework (ABS 2009).

The ABS will provide a revised version of the trend and seasonally adjusted time series when either more information relating to the impact comes to hand or when more observations become available, allowing an appropriate methodological intervention to be applied.

MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT APPROPRIATE TREATMENT OF UNUSUAL EVENTS IN TIME SERIES

Given the range of possible impacts of real world events on time series data outlined above, rigorous qualitative and quantitative assessments and judgment are needed when making decisions about the appropriate methodological treatment of affected time series for seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. In the event of there being impacts on series which are due to unusual real world events, there are four major approaches which can be taken. These are outlined here briefly.

One option for time series analysts is to make no correction to the seasonal adjustment estimation procedure, and to allow trend estimates and seasonal factors to continue their natural course. This approach may be most appropriate when there is very little or no information available to indicate how long an unusual event may persist.

A second option is to make a correction for the extreme estimate after one additional original estimate becomes available. In other words, no correction to the estimation procedure is made at the time of the occurrence of the unusual event, but a correction is inserted in the next publication of the series.

Third, a trend break correction may be introduced after three or more periods following the occurrence of the unusual event. The trend estimates may not be published in the period prior to introducing such a correction. This approach is currently being used to manage the ABS Retail Trade series which heavily reflects the impacts of the global financial crisis and the government stimulus interventions. As will be discussed in more detail in the following case study, the trend series is currently suspended from this publication pending the collection of additional retail trade data over time to enable the identification of appropriate treatments for trend estimates. If the ABS had continued to publish the trend for these series, the trend series could have provided a misleading signal to users due to the unusual influences on the trend estimation method.

Finally, a seasonal break correction may be introduced after three or more years of additional original estimates become available. Until then, the trend and seasonally adjusted estimates continue to be calculated without methodological intervention.

The choice of approach to be taken when dealing with time series affected by unusual real world events also depends on a number of other factors. These include the measurability of an impact (the estimated size of a known impact in the context of the usual volatility of the indicator series); data frequency (higher frequency time series are generally more greatly impacted by a particular distortion or outlier); different impacts on different parts of the economy (an impact on some ABS indicators may not be observed, or may be observed differently, for other ABS economic indicators); and consistency (the need to consider related indicator time series which have similar underlying concepts when applying treatments or interventions to seasonally adjusted and trend estimates).

CASE STUDY 1: RETAIL TRADE FOLLOWING THE DECEMBER 2008 GOVERNMENT STIMULUS PACKAGE

As mentioned earlier, the impact of the US credit crunch induced by the sub-prime mortgage crisis and the drying up of liquidity started in 2007 and then proceeded to spread around the world. The Australian financial markets and economy were not immune from this crisis, and a notable slowing down of Australian retail turnover has been observed since 2007. To prevent a potential spiral and slowing down of the economy, the Australian Government implemented a \$10.4 billion Economic Security Strategy as a short term cash injection stimulus package to strengthen the Australian economy in the face of the worst global financial crisis since the Great Depression.

For December 2008, the original and seasonally adjusted Retail Trade estimates included consumer spending resulting from payments received by families and pensioners as part of the this package. The full amount of these payments is unlikely to have been spent entirely in December and may have been spent in later months in either the retail or non-retail sectors, or alternatively used to reduce debt or to contribute to savings (which may in turn impact on future spending patterns).

In February, the Australian Government announced a further \$42 billion Nation Building and Jobs Plan to support jobs and invest in future long term economic growth. This included both a short term stimulus package and a series of long term infrastructure projects (Rudd 2009).

As noted previously, ABS trend estimates attempt to measure the underlying behaviour in retail activity. In the short term, the trend measurement may be significantly affected by an unusual influence in the original and

seasonally adjusted estimates like that observed since December 2008. If the trend estimates were to be calculated without fully accounting for this unusual irregular event, they would be likely to provide a misleading view of the underlying trend in retail activity.

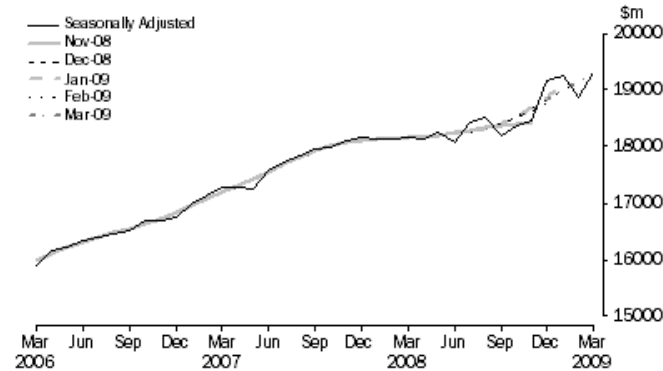
Additionally, spending behaviour in subsequent months may also be influenced by the December 2009 and February 2009 stimulus packages and it may be some time before the true underlying behaviour of the data can be accurately estimated. In response, the ABS decided: (1) to use seasonal factors projected from previous data for seasonal adjustment rather than using the original observations up to the current time point to estimate seasonal factors; and (2) to suspend publication of the trend estimate from December 2008 (ABS, 2008) pending the collection of additional Retail Trade original observations to enable the identification of appropriate treatments for trend estimation.

The total Australian Retail Trade and the total Domestic Appliances and Recorded Music sub-group are used to demonstrate the impact of the stimulus packages if no intervention were applied to trend estimates.

Figure 1 shows the seasonally adjusted estimate of total Australian Retail Trade up to March 2009, with scenario trend estimates (calculated using November 2008, December 2008, January 2009, February 2009 and March 2009 as their respective end-points) superimposed. It is evident that retail trade started to slow down from the end of 2007. The trend estimates at the November 2008 time point show a reasonably flat increase in the trend at the time. The first Australian Government stimulus package was implemented in December 2008. As a result, retail spending for December 2008 had its largest increase in seasonally adjusted terms since 2000. If no methodological intervention had been applied, the trend estimates of the December 2008 time point would have been distorted, artificially lifting the trend estimates from August 2008 onwards. Obviously, this does not truly reflect the economic reality at that time. It appears that the first Australian Government stimulus package had a profound impact on retail trade in December 2008, and again in January 2009. A lower retail trade observation in February 2009 can be potentially attributed to the short term cash injection running out of strength.

As a consequence of the second government stimulus package announced in February 2009, the retail trade observations again started to grow. From this example, we can see that the retail trade seasonally adjusted estimates appeared to reflect consumer reactions to the government stimulus packages. Since trend estimates are designed to reveal the longer term underlying movement of a series, there is not enough information from the last few months' observations to estimate the potential profound long term impact to the retail trade trend direction, although short-term variations induced by the stimulus packages were observed.

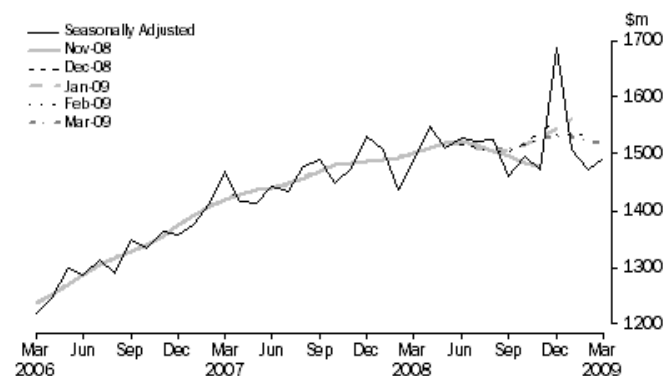
FIGURE 1: AUSTRALIAN RETAIL TRADE



We now turn to examining the most affected retail sub-group, which is Domestic Appliances and Recorded Music. Consumers appeared to take advantage of the cash injection stimulus package to purchase popular domestic appliances like large plasma/LCD TV, air conditioners and computers.

Figure 2 shows the seasonally adjusted estimates of the Domestic Appliances and Recorded Music Retailing sub-group, with the scenario trend estimates superimposed (as in Figure 1). A large peak at December 2008 reflects the consumer response to the Government's first stimulus package following a decrease in sales since July 2008. The November 2008 trend scenario illustrates clearly the decreasing trend over the five previous months. However, without appropriate methodological intervention, the December 2008 trend scenario shows the increasing trend since September 2008 and potential large increase after December 2008. These estimates obviously provide a misleading picture of reality in later 2008 and give a potentially wrong signal for the future. The consequent trend estimate revisions after December 2008 also show that the December 2008 time point trend estimates are misleading.

FIGURE 2: DOMESTIC APPLIANCES AND RECORDED MUSIC RETAILING



To avoid giving policy decision makers, economic analysts and the general public misleading long term signals in the original estimates at the time, ABS decided to suspend publication of the Retail Trade trend estimates until more data become available to support appropriate methodological intervention and to produce accurate trend estimates.

FURTHER INFORMATION

This article has sought to review the impact on ABS time series when 'business-as-usual' economic conditions do not prevail.

Readers seeking to obtain more information about methodological issues associated with ABS time series are welcome to contact the ABS' Methodology and Data Management Division at methodology@abs.gov.au or by telephone via the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

Interested readers are also referred to the ABS publication, **Time Series Analysis Frequently Asked Questions** (cat. no. 1346.0.55.002) which can be found on the ABS website www.abs.gov.au.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008, **Retail Trade, Australia, December 2008**, cat. no. 8501.0, ABS, Canberra.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2009, **ABS Data Quality Framework**, cat. no. 1520.0, ABS, Canberra.

Rudd, Kevin 2008, **Press release - Joint Press Release with, the Treasurer, Wayne Swan, Economic Security Strategy** <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/5521>

Rudd, Kevin 2009, **Press release - \$42 billion nation building and jobs plan**, <http://www.pm.gov.au/node/5331>

Shiskin, J., Young, A. H., and Musgrave, J. C. 1967. **The X11 variant of the Census Method II Seasonal Adjustment Program. Technical Paper 15**, Bureau of the Census, US Department of Commerce, Washington DC.

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National Accounts — Long time series



International Accounts — Long time series



Consumption and Investment — Long time series



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1 Explanatory Notes in the form found in other ABS publications are not included in **Australian Economic Indicators**. Readers are directed to the Explanatory Notes contained in related ABS publications.

2 Australian Economic Indicators presents a statistical summary of the Australian economy, together with international comparisons of selected economic indicators. It also includes commentaries, articles and technical notes. **Australian Economic Indicators** has been developed primarily as a reference document, providing a broad basis for economic analysis and research.

3 The tables contain mainly ABS data, although data from other sources are included. For ABS sourced data, the publication name and catalogue number are included in the footnotes of the tables. If the data are from other sources, the source organisation's name is included in the footnotes.

MOST RECENT DATA

4 The statistics shown are the latest available as at 29 July 2009.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

5 A list of related publications is included on the ABS website under the Related Information tab of the latest release of **Australian Economic Indicators**. These include publications which are the source of the data in the tables and other related publications.

6 Other useful sources of detailed information are the 'Concepts, Sources and Methods' and classification publications. These are released irregularly, each relating to a specific publication, collection or standard classification. The publications most relevant to Australian Economic Indicators include:

- **Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC)**, cat. no. 1292.0
- **Australian System of Government Finance Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods 2005**, cat. no. 5514.0
- **Australian National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods**, cat. no. 5216.0
- **Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods**, cat. no. 5331.0
- **Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods**, cat. no. 6102.0.55.001
- **Labour Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods**, cat. no. 6351.0.55.001
- **Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods**, cat. no. 6461.0.

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED AND TREND ESTIMATES

7 Series in this publication include original, seasonally adjusted and trend series. Special care should always be taken in interpreting data for the most recent months and quarters. Some of the original and all of the seasonally adjusted and trend series are subject to revision.

8 It is not uncommon for movements in original time series data and those provided from seasonally adjusted and trend series to differ significantly. Movements in a time series of original data may reflect several factors, including:

- longer-term changes in the item being measured (i.e. trend movements)
- short-term irregular changes
- regular seasonal influences
- normal 'trading', 'working' or 'pay' day patterns
- systematic holiday effects.

9 Seasonal adjustment and trend estimates help the user to identify the effect of these influences on the time series. Seasonal adjustment removes the effect of the last three listed influences from the data, leaving only the trend and short-term irregular movements. Trend estimates are then obtained by removing the effects of the short-term irregularities, which in many series can be a major contributor to movements in the original data. By comparing the historical trend series with the seasonally adjusted series, the user can identify the

short-term irregularities which have influenced the original series.

10 Trend estimates produced by the ABS are based on Henderson Moving Averages, and are therefore subject to revision especially for the latest few months or quarters.

11 The general methods used in the ABS for making seasonal adjustments are described in Information paper: **An Introductory Course on Time Series Analysis - Electronic Delivery** (cat. no. 1346.0.55.001). The method used to estimate trends is described in Information Paper: **A Guide to Interpreting Time Series - Monitoring Trends** (cat. no. 1349.0).

12 The ABS uses concurrent seasonal adjustment to derive the combined adjustment factors. This means that data from the current month are used in estimating seasonal and trading day factors for the current and previous months. Concurrent adjustment can result in revisions each month to estimates for earlier periods. However, in most instances, the only noticeable revisions will be to the combined adjustment factors for the current month, the previous month and the same month a year ago. As a result of the concurrent seasonal adjustment the trend estimates are also concurrently estimated. Further information on concurrent seasonal adjustment can be found in Information Paper: **Introduction of Concurrent Seasonal Adjustment into the Retail Trade Series, 1999** (cat. no. 8514.0).

CHAIN VOLUME MEASURES

13 The chain volume measures appearing in this publication are annually-reweighted chain Laspeyres indexes referenced to the current price values in a chosen reference year (i.e. the year when the quarterly chain volume measures sum to the current price annual values). Chain Laspeyres volume measures are compiled by linking together (compounding) movements in volumes, calculated using the average prices of the previous financial year, and applying the compounded movements to the current price estimates of the reference year. Quarterly chain volume estimates are benchmarked to annual chain volume estimates, so that the quarterly estimates for a financial year sum to the corresponding annual estimate.

14 Chain volume measures are not generally additive. In other words, in general, component chain volume measures do not sum to a total in the way original current price components do. In order to minimise the impact of this property, the ABS uses the latest base year as the reference year (i.e. the year prior to the latest complete financial year). By adopting this approach, non-additivity does not exist for the quarters following the reference year (currently 2006-07) and is relatively small for the quarters in the reference year and the quarters immediately preceding it. A new base year and the reference year for volume measures are updated annually in the September quarter Australian National Accounts (**Australian Economic Indicators**, January issue). In the September quarter 2008 Australian National Accounts issue, the new reference year became 2006-07 for volume estimates. This had two effects, first, a new base year, 2006-07, was introduced which has resulted in revisions to growth rates in subsequent periods. Second, the volume estimates have been re-referenced to 2006-07 thus preserving additivity in the quarters after the reference year. Re-referencing changes levels but not growth rates, although some revision to recent growth rates can be expected because of the introduction of a more recent base year (and revisions to the current price estimates underlying the chain volume measures).

OTHER USAGES

15 Columns in bold in the tables indicate a total. Columns usually sum from the left, with the total appearing on the right. A major exception is the balance of payments and international investment position data in Chapter 2. These data sum from the right with the total appearing on the left - in keeping with the international standard for these statistics. Some tables include subtotal columns and columns which need to be subtracted to obtain the total. Where this is not clear a footnote explains the relationship between the columns.

16 Columns in italics indicate that seasonally adjusted or trend estimates are not available for that column, and original data are provided instead.

17 Yearly periods shown as, e.g. 2007-08, refer to the fiscal year ended 30 June 2008.

18 Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals. Percentage changes may not be exactly comparable to tabulated source series due to rounding of the source series, the percentage change series or both.

METRIC PREFIXES

19 Deca (da) = ten
Hecto (h) = hundred
Kilo (k) = thousand
Mega (M) = million
Giga (G) = thousand million
Tera (T) = million million

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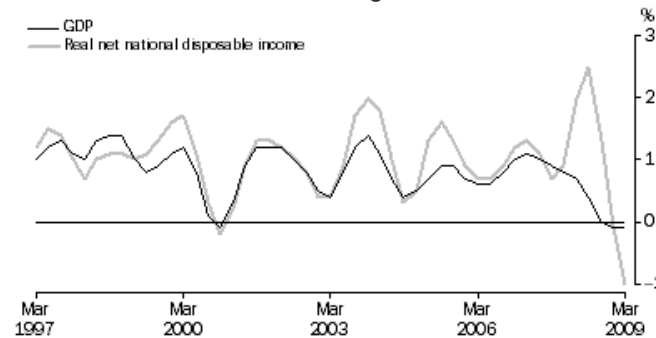
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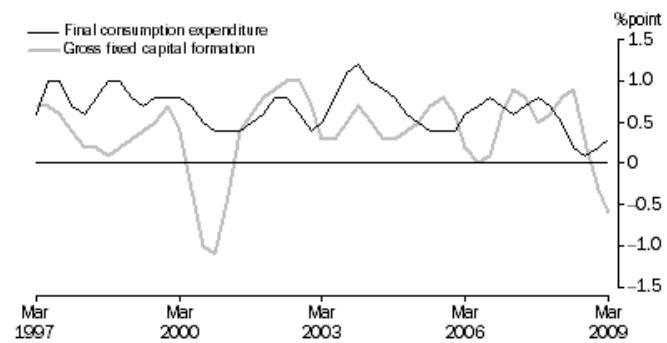
GRAPHS

GDP and real net national disposable income, (from Table 1.1) Chain volume measures, Trend - Quarterly % change



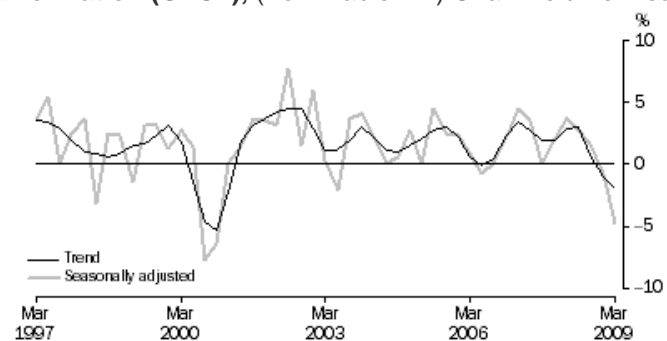
Source: Australian National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat. no. 5206.0)

Contributions to growth in GDP, (from Table 1.2) Chain volume measure, Trend



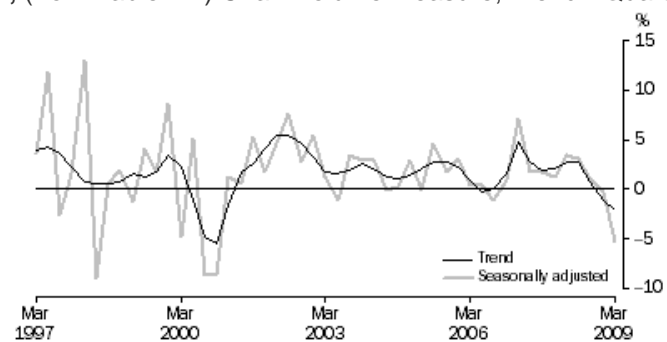
Source: Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat. no. 5206.0)

Total gross fixed capital formation (GFCF), (from Table 1.2) Chain volume measure-Quarterly % change



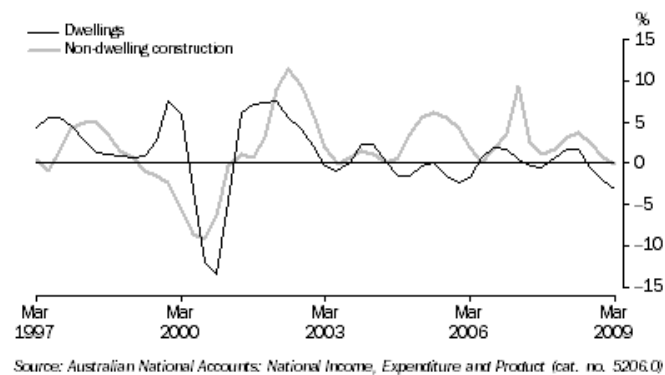
Source: Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat. no. 5206.0)

Private GFCF, (from Table 1.2) Chain volume measure, Trend - Quarterly % change

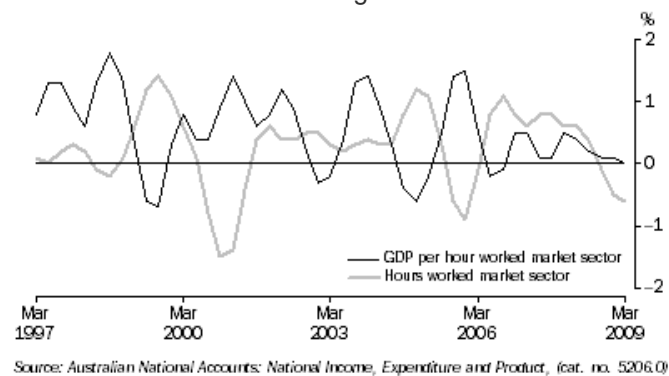


Source: Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat. no. 5206.0)

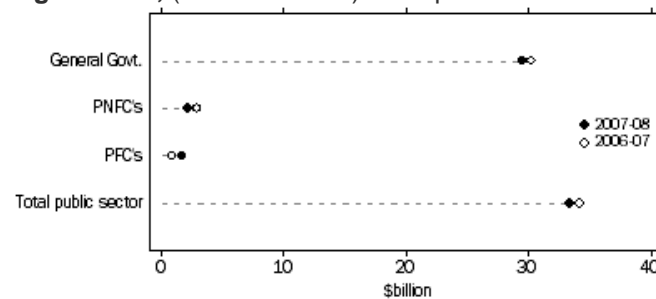
Private GFCF: selected components, (from Table 1.2) Chain volume measure, Trend-Quarterly % change



Labour productivity (proxy) trend, (from Table 1.6) GDP Market sector, Chain volume measure-Quarterly % change

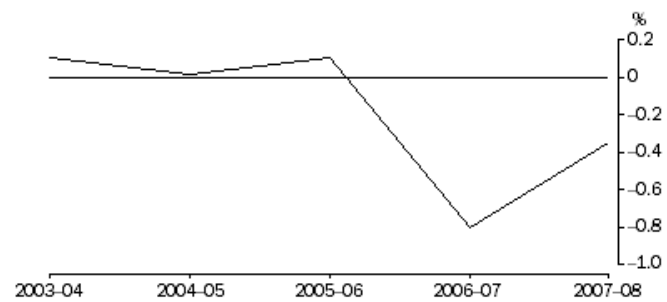


GFS Net operating balance, (from Table 1.7) Total public sector - 2006-07 and 2007-08



Notes: PNFC = Public Non-Financial Corporations.
PFC = Public Financial Corporations.
Source: Government Finance Statistics, Australia, (cat. no. 5512.0)

Total public sector, (from Table 1.7) Net lending/borrowing as a percentage of GDP



Notes: A negative percentage of GDP represents a net borrowing position.
A positive percentage of GDP represents a net lending position.
Source: Government Finance Statistics, (cat. no. 5512.0)

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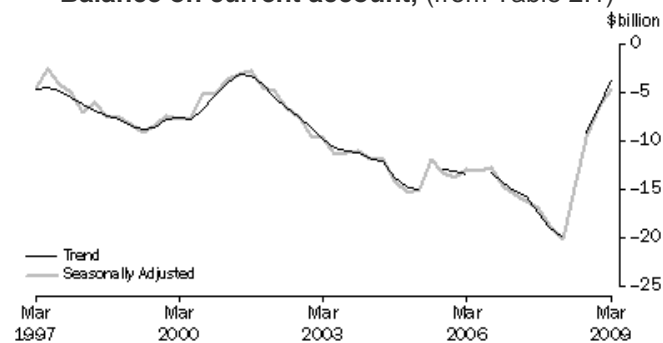
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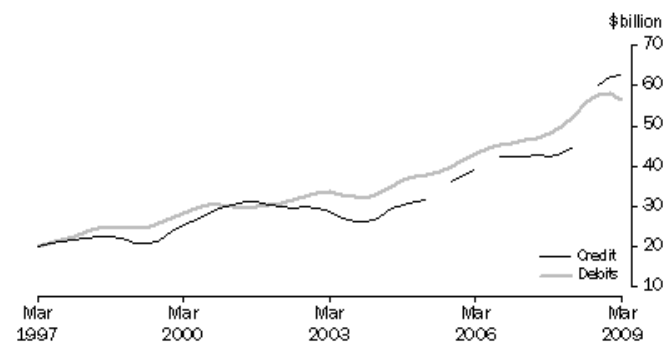
GRAPHS

Balance on current account, (from Table 2.1)



Source: Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia, (cat. no. 5302.0)

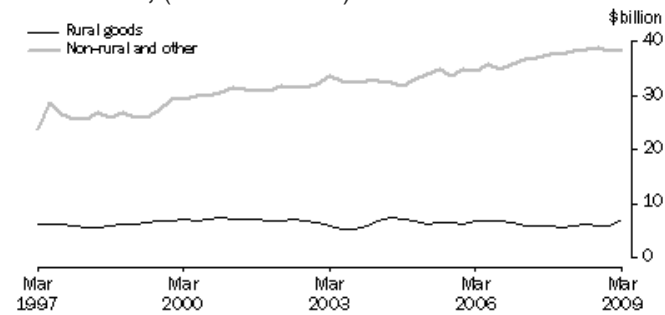
Goods, (from Table 2.1) Trend



Financial account, (from Table 2.2) Selected types of investment

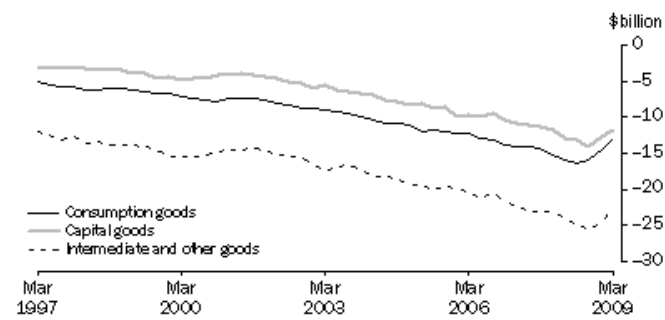


Components of goods credits, (from Table 2.3) Chain volume measures - Seasonally adjusted



Source: Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia, (cat. no. 5302.0)

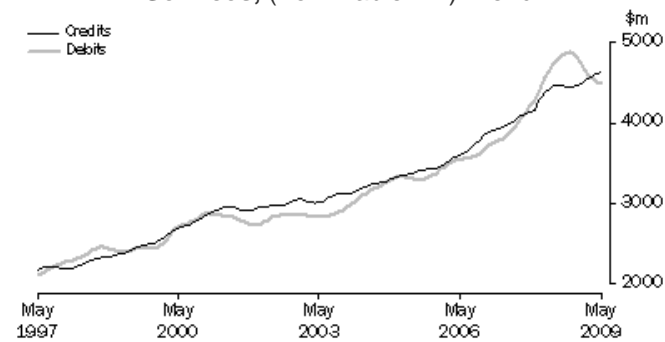
Components of goods debits, (from Table 2.3) Chain volume measures - Seasonally adjusted



(a) Reference year 2006-07

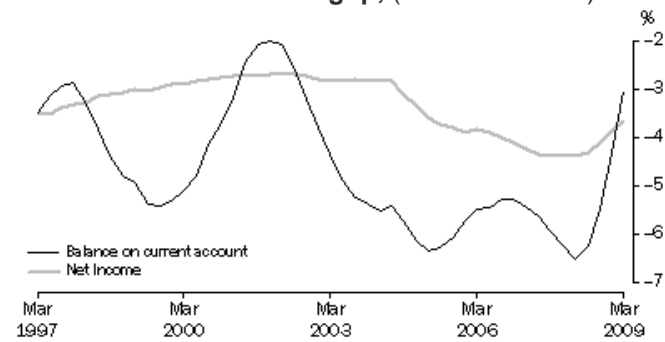
Source: Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia, (cat. no. 5302.0)

Services, (from Table 2.7) Trend



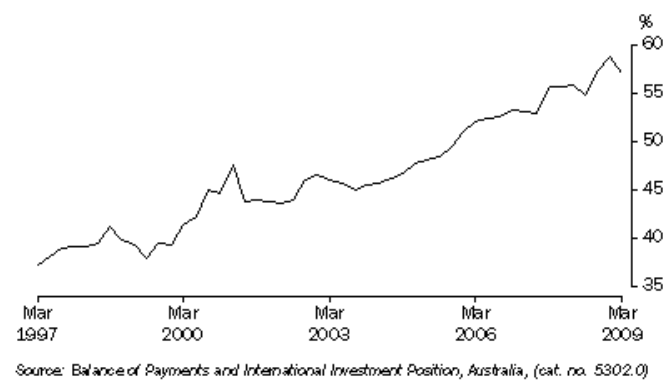
Source: International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia, (cat. no. 5368.0)

Current account to gdp, (from Table 2.11)

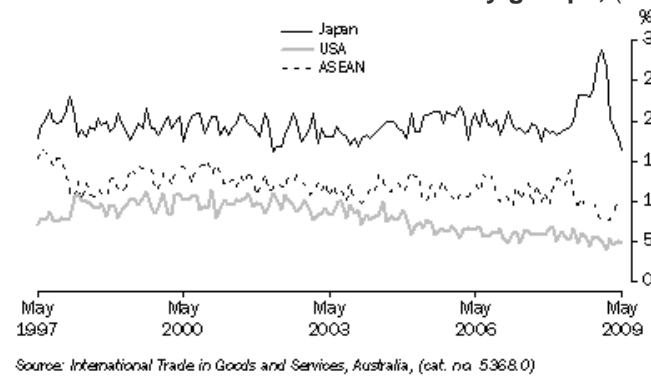


Source: Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia, (cat. no. 5302.0)

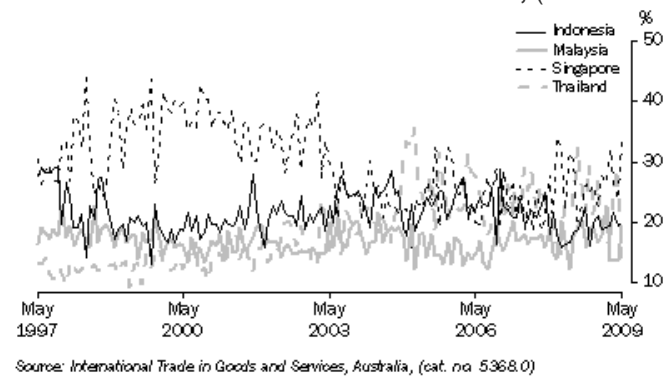
Net foreign debt to gdp, (from Table 2.11)



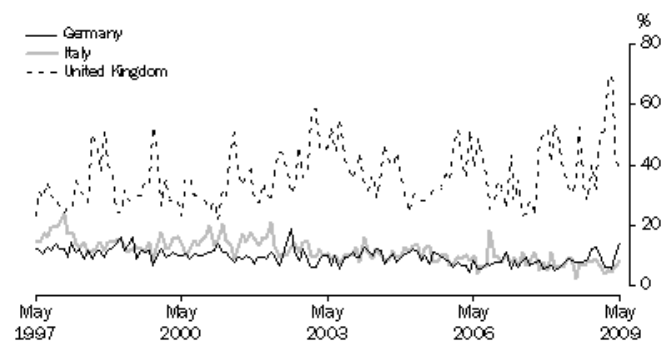
Export shares with selected countries and country groups, (from Table 2.13)



Export shares with selected ASEAN countries, (from Table 2.15)

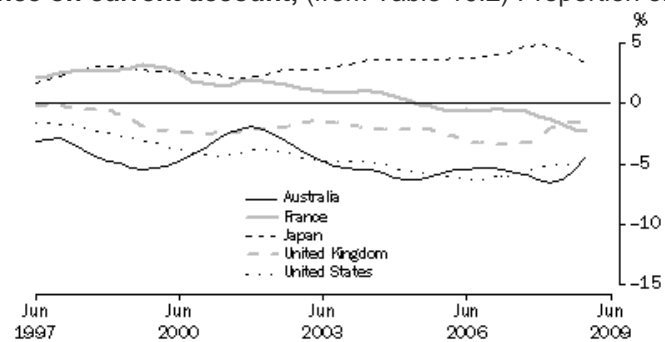


Export shares with selected European Union countries, (from Table 2.17)



Source: *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia*, (cat. no. 5368.0)

Balance on current account, (from Table 10.2) Proportion of GDP



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD.

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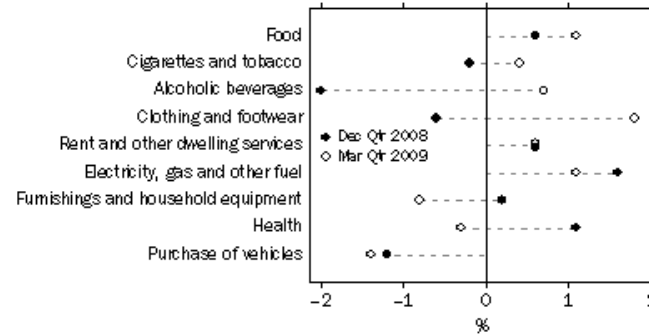
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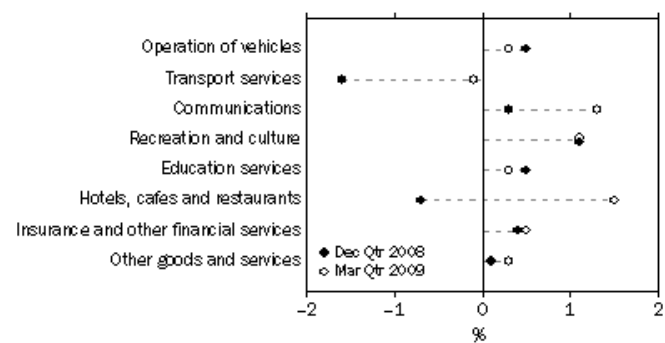
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Household final consumption expenditure, (from Table 3.1) Seasonally adjusted - Chain volume measures: Quarterly % change



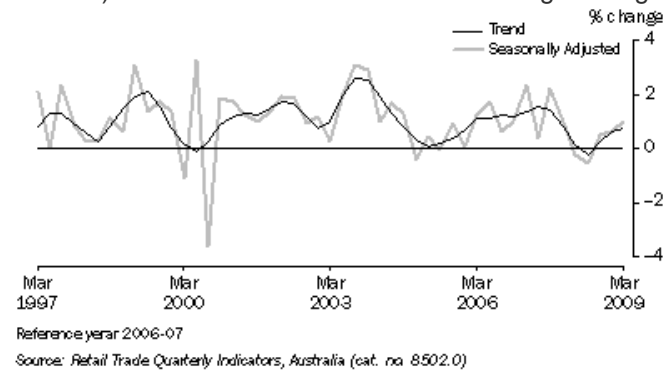
Source: Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat. no. 5206.0)

Household final consumption expenditure, (from Table 3.1) Seasonally adjusted - Chain volume measures: Quarterly % change

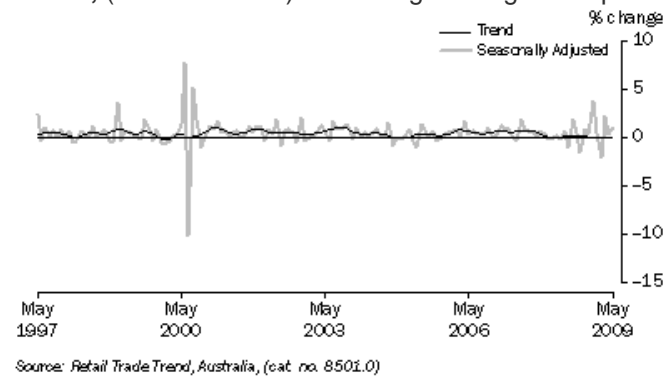


Source: Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat. no. 5206.0)

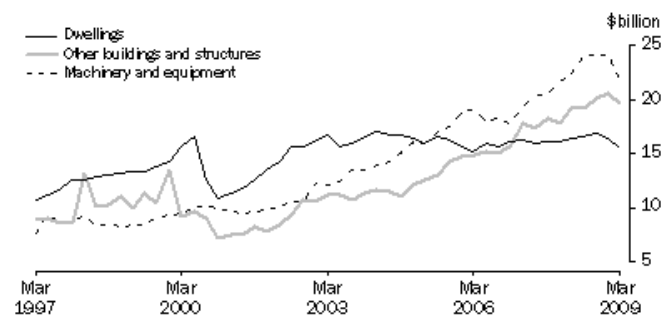
Retail Trade, (from Table 3.2) Chain Volume Measures - Percentage change from previous quarter



Retail Turnover, (from Table 3.3) Percentage change from previous month



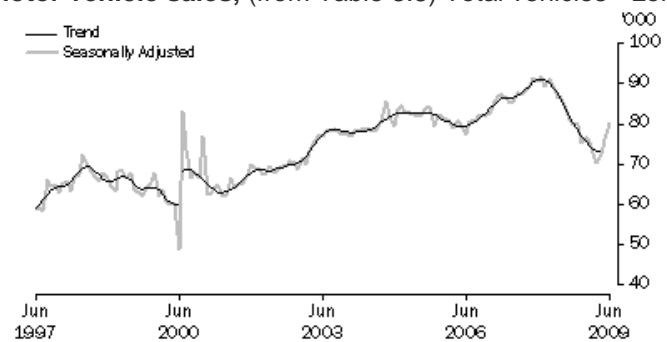
Private gross fixed capital formation, (from Table 3.4) Seasonally adjusted - Chain volume measures



(a) Reference year 2006-07

Source: Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat. no. 5206.0)

New motor vehicle sales, (from Table 3.8) Total vehicles - Long term



Source: Sales of New Motor Vehicles, (Electronic Publication), (cat. no. 9314.0.55.001)

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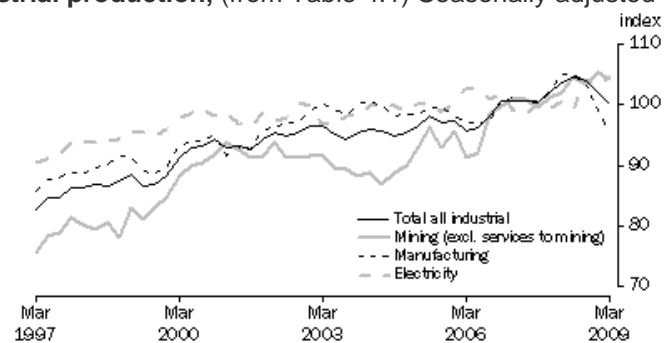
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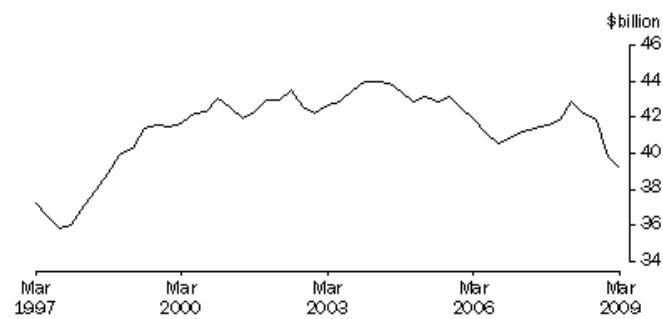
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Indexes of industrial production, (from Table 4.1) Seasonally adjusted - 2006-07 = 100.0



Source: Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, (cat no. 5206.0)

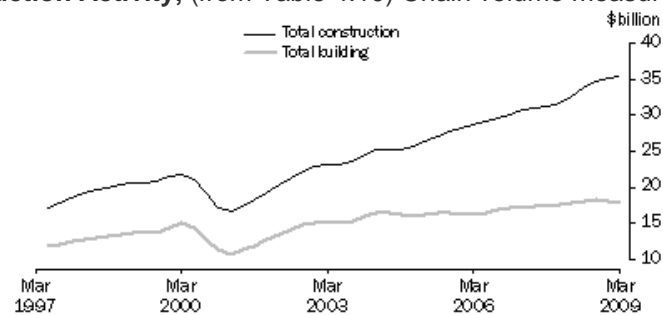
Manufacturers' inventories, (from Table 4.4) Seasonally adjusted - Chain volume measure



(a) Reference year 2006-07

Source: Business Indicators, Australia, (cat. no. 5676.0)

Construction Activity, (from Table 4.10) Chain volume measure - Trend



(a) Reference year 2006-07

Source: Manufacturing and Construction Section.

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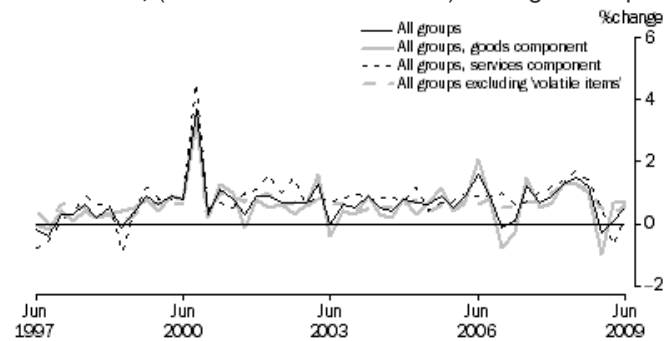
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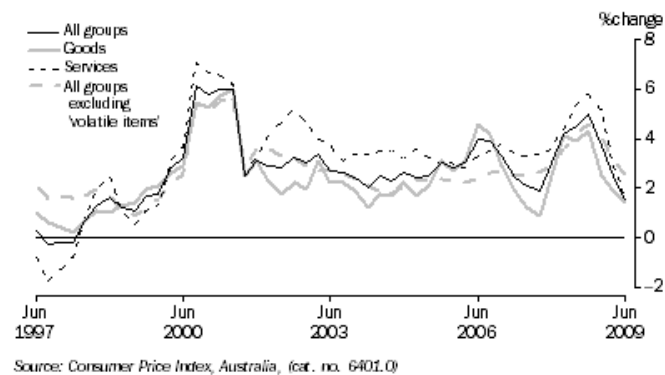
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Consumer Price Index, (from Table 5.1 and 5.14) Change from previous quarter

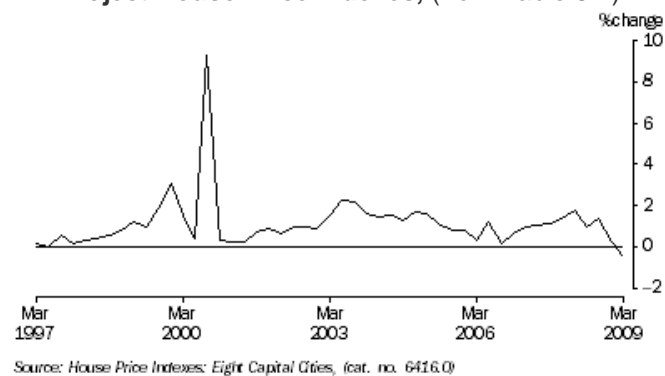


Source: Consumer Price Index, Australia, (cat. no. 6401.0)

Consumer Price Index, (from Table 5.1 and 5.14) Change from corresponding quarter of previous year



Project House Price Indexes, (from Table 5.7)



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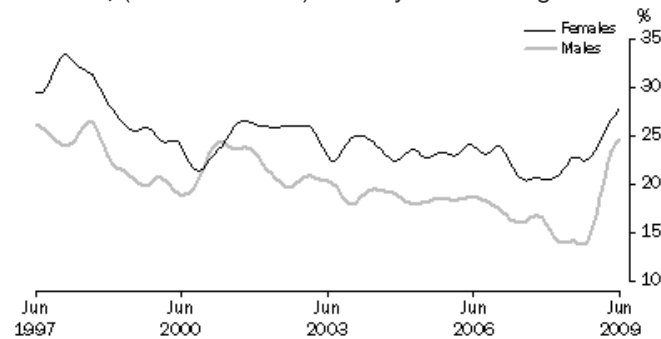
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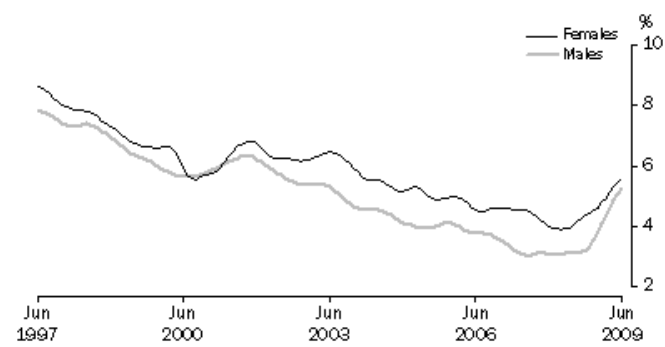
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Unemployment rates, (from Table 6.4) 15-19 years looking for full time work-Trend

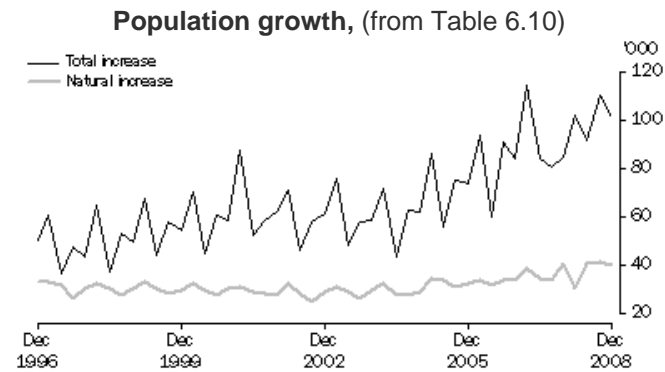


Source: Labour Force, Australia, (cat. no. 6202.0)

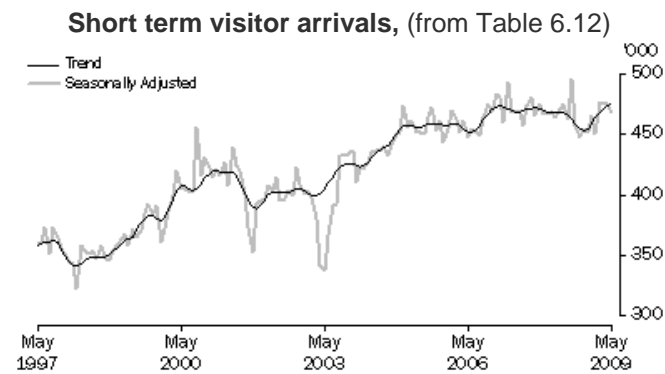
Unemployment rates, (from Table 6.4) 20 years and over looking for full time work-Trend



Source: Labour Force, Australia, (cat. no. 6202.0)

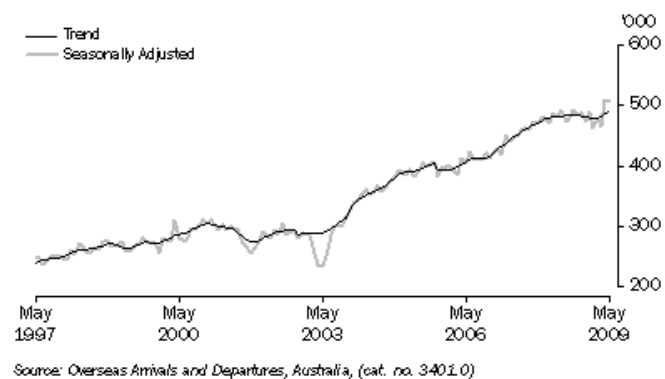


Source: Australian Demographic Statistics, Australia, (cat. no. 3101.0)

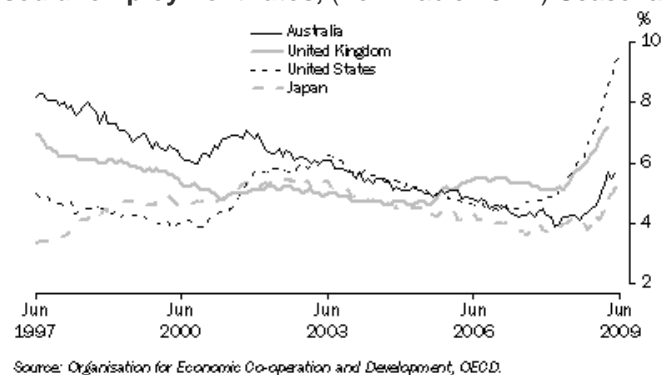


Source: Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, (cat. no. 3401.0)

Short term resident departures, (from Table 6.12)



Standardised unemployment rates, (from Table 10.12) Seasonally adjusted



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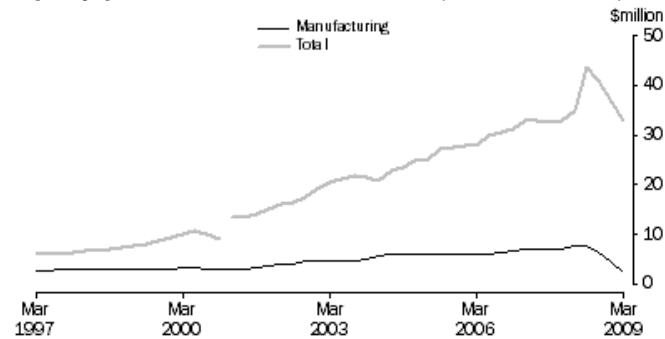
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Company profits before income tax, (from Table 7.3) Trend



Source: Business Indicators, Australia, (cat. no. 5676.0)

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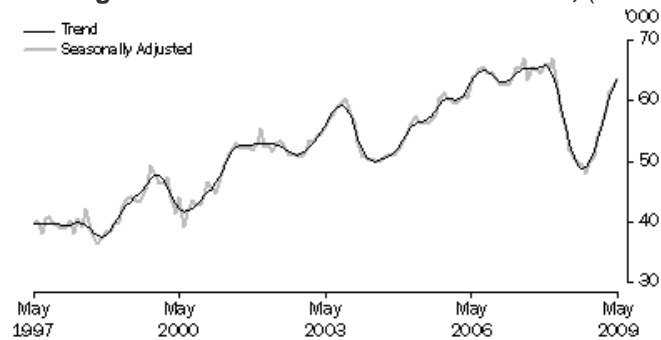
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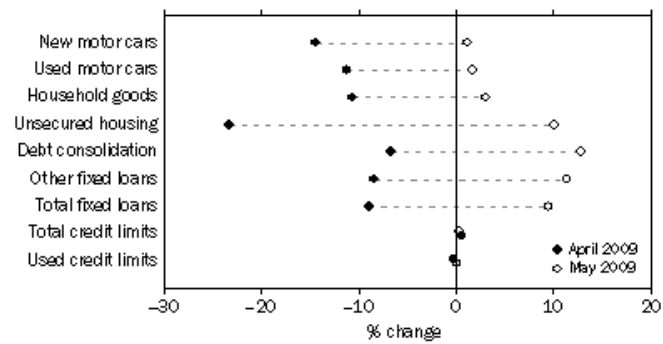
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Secured housing finance commitments to individuals, (from Table 8.2)



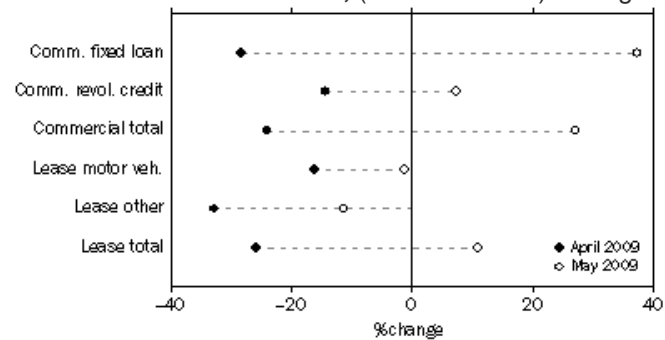
Source: *Housing Finance, Australia*, (cat. no. 5609.0)

Personal finance commitments, (from Table 8.3) Change from previous month



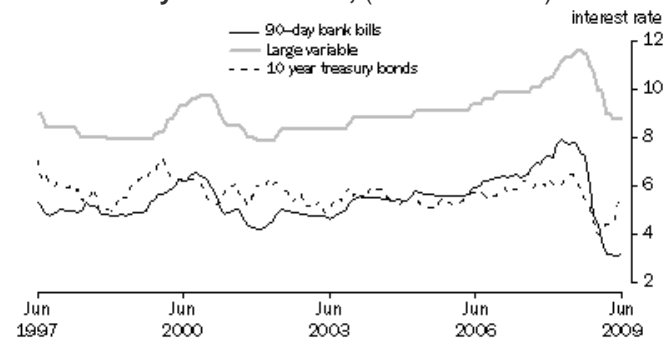
Source: Lending Finance, Australia, (cat. no. 5671.0)

Commercial and lease finance commitments, (from Table 8.4) Change from previous month



Source: Lending Finance, Australia, (cat. no. 5671.0)

Key interest rates, (from Table 8.5)

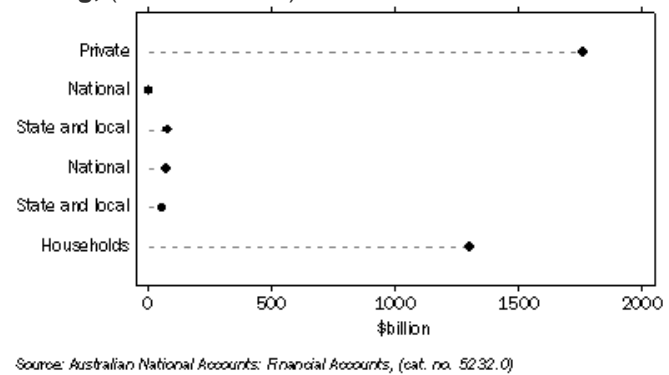


Source: RBA Statistical Bulletin

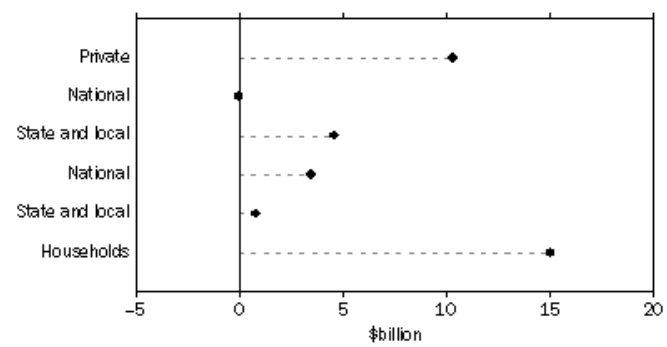
Trade weighted index, (from Table 8.6) - May 1970 = 100.0



Credit market outstanding, (from Table 8.8) Non-financial domestic sector - March Quarter 2009



Demand for credit by, (from Table 8.8) Non-financial domestic sector - March Quarter 2009



Source: Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts, (cat. no. 5232.0)

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INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

For more information, we have included [Tables](#), and [Long time series](#) spreadsheets.

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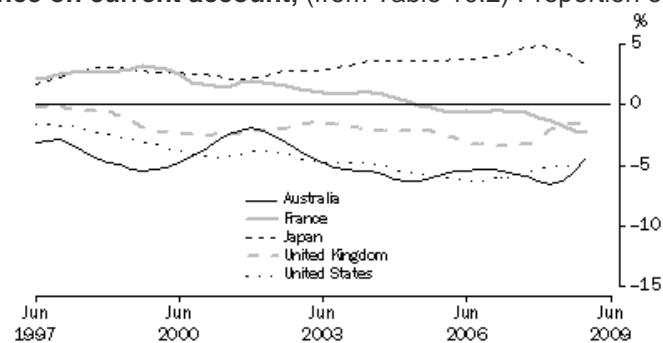
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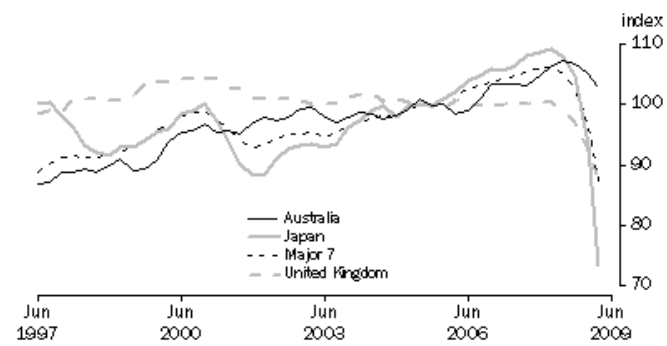
GRAPHS

Balance on current account, (from Table 10.2) Proportion of GDP



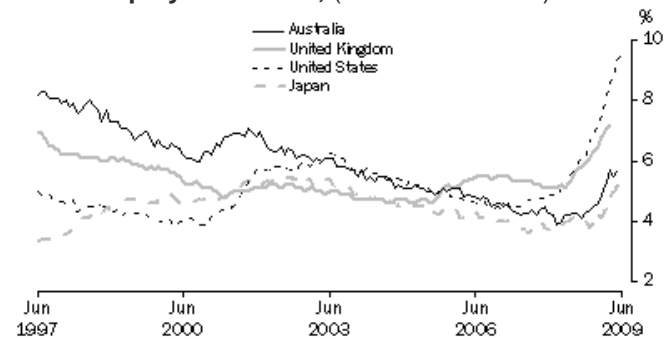
Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD.

Industrial production volume index, (from Table 10.6) 2005 = 100



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD.

Standardised unemployment rates, (from Table 10.12) Seasonally adjusted



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD.

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